

# WASHINGTON NEWS

An Associated Press dispatch says: Primary elections for the selection of fourth class postmasters are provided for in an amendment to the postoffice appropriation bill which the senate committee on postoffices added to that measure. Consideration of the measure was completed by the committee, but on account of the necessity of gathering information relating to some of the changes, the bill as amended regarding fourth class postmasters was adopted as a result of a suggestion by Senator Bristow of Kansas, although his original provision was much modified. As agreed upon by the committee, it will apply only to fourth class offices, and it will be optional with the postoffice department as to whether the system shall be put into execution. In that event elections and when such elections are held it is made obligatory upon the department to appoint the person receiving the highest number of votes among the patrons of any given postoffice.

Congress formally declared Woodrow Wilson elected president and Thomas Marshall vice president.

A dispatch to the Louisville Courier-Journal says: Upon the failure of enginemen and railroad managers to agree upon a method of arbitrating differences, government officials were asked to avert by mediation the threatened strike of 34,000 firemen.

A cablegram from Paris, carried by the Associated Press, says: The United States embassy in France is about to be turned into the streets. The landlord of the house in which the embassy offices are situated on the Avenue Kleber, and where they have been located for fifteen years, has given notice that the place must be vacated on April 15, as he intends to transform it into a hotel. The question of finding a suitable location for the chancery of the embassy has become a serious one, owing to the overcrowding of Paris.

Senator La Follette has been elected a member of the republican steering committee of the senate and republican leaders say this fixes him as a regular republican.

A special dispatch to the New York World says: Rudolph Spreckles, the California millionaire, who charges the secretary of the treasury with having violated the law when, acting under Treasury Order No. 5, he deposited custom receipts in national banks, had a talk with Representative Carter Glass of Virginia, chairman of the sub-committee investigating banking and currency. Mr. Spreckles is trying to have a congressional investigation into the matter, but Mr. Glass, after his conference with Mr. Spreckles, said that so far as he is concerned no further steps will be taken, Mr. Glass deeming Mr. MacVeagh's explanation entirely satisfactory. The Poindexter resolution calling upon Secretary MacVeagh for a full statement of his reasons for issuing the order was passed by the senate. The order has been attacked on the ground that it would allow an undue concentration of government funds in New York banks.

President Taft vetoed the Dillingham-Burnett immigration bill, which bill provided illiteracy test upon all foreigners seeking admission to

America. The president in his message of veto said that he disapproved the measure because it would lock the doors of the United States against the alien who could not read some language or dialect.

Postmaster General Hitchcock has renewed his recommendation that the government take over the telegraph lines.

The right of Castro, former president of Venezuela, to remain in America, which right was upheld by the federal court held in New York, will go to the United States supreme court.

The house re-passed the Webb bill to prohibit the shipment of intoxicating liquors into dry states and the measure now goes to the president for his decision.

The bill to provide \$2,000,000 for government participation in the Panama-Pacific exposition was killed for this session by the house.

President-elect Wilson stated that he would announce the names of the members of his cabinet March 4.

### DYING HARD

National banks are chartered by the United States government. They have powers and privileges that are denied to all other banks. Among these powers is that of issuing money, which is an attribute of sovereignty itself.

Congress could, this very day, repeal the act under which these banks were created and send every one of them into liquidation. It could by a single law destroy all those privileges under which the First National bank, for example, has made \$80,000,000 in profits on an original investment of \$500,000.

Yet George F. Baker, president of that bank, tells a committee of congress that "this committee has no more right to my list of bank securities than the public has to my tailor bill." He tells this committee that "it's none of congress's business how many banks are controlled by a national bank." He tells this committee that there is no reason for the surrender of certain syndicates to congress, and that "as to the partners in interest, it is a purely private affair." He tells this committee that by a securities company organized by the First National bank is "purely a personal, private transaction."

The old order dies hard and it fights to the last. It required years of agitation and legislation to convince the reluctant railroads that they were affected with a public interest and that they could have no honest secrets from the public.

It required years of agitation to convince corporations that they were not above the government that chartered them.

Men like Mr. Baker think that a national bank is a private affair. Other men of his type lustily proclaim that the Stock Exchange is a private affair. All of them exploit the ancient theory that the public is a new milch cow whose sole function is to be exploded for individual profit. But their day is done.

Mr. Baker is an interesting but not an important relic of a dead past. Ten years from now financiers of his type will be as rare as railroad presidents who deny the right of the government to regulate interstate commerce.—New York World.

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